

Message Text

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70

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 ORM-02 AID-05 IGA-02

OMB-01 TRSY-02 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /102 W

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R 030928Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6779

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONGEN HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 32893

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SREF, CB, TH

SUBJECT: REFOULEMENT OF CAMBODIAN REFUGEES

REF: BANGKOK 32669

1. ENGLISH LANGUAGE NATION REVIEW OF DEC 3 CARRIED STORY THAT THAI CABINET AT SESSION DEC 2, HAD DECIDED TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO CONTACT THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS WITH A REQUEST THAT A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THAILAND BE ALLOWED TO GO INTO CAMBODIA TO PROBE THE ALLEGED EXECUTION OF 26 CAMBODIAN REFUGEES REPATRIATED NOV 23 (SEE REFTEL AND PREVIOUS). ARTICLE WENT ON TO SAY THAT THAI REP WOULD BE ONE WHO HAD DEALT WITH THE REFUGEES WHEN THEY WERE HANDED OVER TO CAMBODIAN AUTHORITIES ON SUSPICION OF BEING SPIES. NATION REVIEW SAID UNHCR HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER EXECUTION RE-
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PORTS, BUT THAT INTERIOR MINISTRY HAD SAID THAT REPORTS

WERE EXAGGERATED AND THAT SAFETY OF REFUGEES HAD BEEN ASSURED BY CAMBODIAN AUTHORITIES BEFORE THEY WERE TAKEN ACROSS THE BORDER.

2. UNHCR SOURCE TOLD EMBOFF THAT THEY HAD RECEIVED FROM MFA COPIES OF TWO REPORTS SENT BY THAI LIAISON OFFICE AT ARANYAPRATHET IN WHICH CAMBODIAN AUTHORITIES ON NOV 25 HAD "THANKED THE THAI GOVERNMENT ONCE AGAIN" FOR THEIR CONCERN OVER FATE OF RETURNEES AND STATED THAT RETURNEES HAD BEEN RELIEVED TO COME HOME. IN SECOND REPORT DATED NOV 26, THAI LIAISON OFFICE SAID THAT CAMBODIAN AUTHORITIES HAD ASSURED THAI THAT ALL RETURNEES HAD BEEN REUNITED WITH THEIR FAMILIES, HAD REPENTED FOR HAVING LEFT CAMBODIA AND WERE NOW LIVING PEACEFULLY, WORKING FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COUNTRY.

3. COMMENT: GIVEN LACK OF SUCCESS THAI HAVE HAD IN ATTEMPTING TO GET CAMBODIA TO DISCUSS RECENT BORDER CLASHES IN SOUTHERN TRAT PROVINCE, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT RTG EXPECTS ANY REAL ASSISTANCE FROM CAMBODIANS IN VERIFYING THE WELL-BEING OF THE 26 REFUGEES. THE PRIMARY ISSUE AT THIS POINT IS THE FUTURE ATTITUDE OF THE RTG TOWARD FORCED REPATRIATION AND PREVENTING FUTURE REFUGEES FROM ENTERING THAILAND. WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT THE THAI HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENTLY EMBARRASSED TO HAVE LEARNED THEIR LESSON, TRAGIC AS THE OUTCOME IN THIS CASE HAS PROBABLY BEEN.
WHITEHOUSE

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